

Answer Key: Chapter 11

Exercise 11.1

After the death of Caesar, Antony urged on the Roman citizens against Brutus and his companions, who had killed him. They therefore fled from the city. Command of the Roman army was given to Antony by the senators. Caesar however, who had no son, had adopted Octavian the son of his sister's daughter. He at that time was in Greece; when he heard about Caesar having been killed, he returned to Rome as quickly as possible in order to seek power for himself. Two of Caesar's legions handed themselves over to Octavian; with these he waged a civil war with Antony. When peace had at last been made, Octavian and Antony crushed the enemies of Caesar in a battle. Then however Antony, having set out for his own province, stayed for a long time with Cleopatra the queen of Egypt, whom Caesar himself had loved previously; he divorced his own wife, the sister of Octavian. Some of the Roman citizens were afraid that Antony would make Cleopatra queen of Rome also. Octavian therefore waged war with Antony again.

Exercise 11.2

The naval battle that was fought at Actium ended the war. Each general had prepared very many ships. Each was standing on a high ship, conspicuous in arms. Octavian led the peoples of Italy into the fight. Against him Antony led Egypt and the peoples of the East; Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt and mistress of Antony, followed him. Fleet sailed against fleet; many missiles were thrown; the sea flowed with blood. Cleopatra called upon all the gods of Egypt against the gods of Rome. Mars turned ship against ship. Finally the whole Egyptian fleet, overcome by fear, made for the Nile. The queen herself fled from the battle first; soon Antony followed her. Then, unhappy because he had been defeated, Antony killed himself. A certain freedman was guarding Cleopatra so that she would not do the same. However, a basket of figs was given to the queen; under the figs was an asp, from whose bite Cleopatra died.

Exercise 11.3

After Octavian overcame Antony in the battle at Actium, he returned to Rome. When he had arrived in the city, he caught sight of an old man in the street who had a raven in a cage. "Greetings," said the raven, "Caesar, victor, emperor!" Amazed, Octavian said he wanted to buy the raven. The old man replied that he would sell the raven at a great price. Octavian bought the raven; the old man went away happy. The next day however a neighbour told him that that old man had another raven. "This raven," he said, "can speak better." Octavian said that he would gladly listen to that raven; the old man was ordered to bring it immediately. "Greetings," said the raven at once, "Antony, victor, emperor!" Terrified, the old man said that he had been prepared for either event. Laughing, Octavian promised that he would buy the other raven for the same price.



Exercise 11.4

Later, Octavian entered Rome in a triumphal procession. In front of all the temples he offered a sacrifice to the gods; through all the streets the happy citizens greeted him as emperor. Prisoners from all the lands that the Romans had overcome were being led in line. Octavian himself was now not only the victor in war, but also emperor of the whole Roman empire. He was thinking about a new name: “Romulus” seemed to be suitable, but “Augustus” (that is, revered) was chosen. Augustus was happy if he was called first citizen, emperor, commander, Caesar. He did not want to be called king, because Romans had once hated kings intensely. He did not want to be called a god, but he hoped that after his death he would have a place among the gods. Although he had not chosen the name of Romulus, he decided to restore the customs of ancient Rome in all things.

Exercise 11.5

Pollio lived in a large house. He had many lampreys in the fish-pond there. Once he invited Augustus to dinner. While they were eating the meal, a slave of Pollio by chance broke a crystal drinking cup. Pollio, who was a very cruel master, immediately ordered him to be thrown into the fish-pond, to be eaten by the lampreys. The terrified slave threw himself at the feet of Augustus and begged that he should not be punished in such a way. Augustus tried to persuade Pollio, but in vain. He therefore then ordered all the crystal drinking cups that were in the house to be brought and broken. Although Pollio was angry, he could not punish the slave because of the broken crystal, because the emperor had done the same; he even freed the slave. When Pollio died, he left his house to Augustus; he however ordered it to be destroyed, so that Pollio would not have a memorial.

Exercise 11.6

Varus was leading the Roman forces in Germany. When he heard that some tribes were preparing to resist Roman power, he foolishly trusted Arminius the chief of the Cherusci; he led the Romans into an ambush. For three legions, forced to fight in a forest and in a storm, were destroyed by the Germans. Three eagles were captured by the enemy. Varus killed himself; when his body had been found, his head was sent to Rome. When Augustus received both the head of Varus and the report of the disaster, he struck the door again and again with his own head, exclaiming unhappily “Varus, give the legions back to me!” Afterwards the ghosts of Roman soldiers were seen walking through the forest. After six years, when Augustus died, Germanicus was sent with four legions to be the avenger of this disaster. In the forest he found weapons, bones, and limbs of both men and horses. When he had buried these, he brought the eagles back from the Germans.

Exercise 11.7

Because he did not have a son, Augustus for a long time did not know who would be emperor after his death. He had several relatives in mind; however, they all died before Augustus himself. At last therefore, when he was by now an old man, he was forced to choose Tiberius his step-son. Tiberius himself was ordered to make Germanicus, his brother’s son, his heir. In this way Augustus was preparing everything so that emperors would follow him; however, they were never called kings, although they almost had the power of a king. When Tacitus the



historian afterwards wrote that at first kings had Rome, everyone who read it understood that kings had now returned with another name.

Tiberius was a good soldier, but an unhappy man: for he knew that Augustus had preferred others. The citizens did not like Tiberius. Germanicus however was a brave and handsome young man, praised by all the citizens. When he died, many believed that Tiberius had ordered him to be killed. Sejanus, the officer in charge of the emperor's guards, had great power in the city. Tiberius trusted him in all matters. At last he went away to Capri, and was not seen in Rome afterwards. However, when he heard that Sejanus had made a plan to be emperor himself, he ordered him also to be killed.

Exercise 11.8

Gaius, the son of Germanicus, when he was two or three year old was always in the army with his father. His mother made very small soldier's clothes for him and little boots; he therefore had the name "Caligula" among the soldiers, who loved him. When Augustus died, the soldiers of Germanicus tried to make a rebellion, because they preferred to have him as emperor rather than Tiberius. Germanicus therefore sent his wife and son out of danger. The soldiers however, because they believed the boy to be lucky for them, asked that Caligula should return; they promised that they would obey their leader; Caligula soon went back.

Afterwards, when Germanicus died, Tiberius made Caligula, who was still a boy, his heir, although he had doubts about him. For he said that he was giving a viper to the people of Rome, a Phaethon to the world. Many years later, when Tiberius himself had died, Caligula was made emperor. Caligula however by now was mad. He tried to make his horse a consul in Rome. When he made an expedition into Britain he ordered his soldiers to collect sea-shells on the shore; then they returned to Rome. After a few months he was killed by his own guards.

Exercise 11.9

After Caligula was killed, the emperor's guards, when they were running through the palace, found Claudius his uncle hiding behind a curtain. Claudius, since he was deaf and lame, was not famous in Rome, although he had written many books. Now however he was made emperor. Immediately he decided to extend the Roman empire. Julius Caesar had not been able to conquer Britain, although he had tried twice. Now after a hundred years Claudius invaded this island with a very big army. He himself stayed in Britain for a short time. Aulus Plautius however, with four legions, made a great part of the island a Roman province. In the war, Caractacus, a leader of the Britons who were resisting the Romans, was defeated and captured. Then he was sent to Rome so that he could be shown as a captive in a triumphal procession and killed. However, he so much praised the courage of the Romans, although they were enemies, that Claudius spared him.

Exercise 11.10

Everyone believed that Claudius had been killed with poison. For Agrippina, as it is said, the emperor's fourth wife, gave him a mushroom in which she had put poison. Claudius himself already had a son, Britannicus by name. Agrippina however had previously persuaded her



husband earlier to make Nero, her own son, his heir. And so Claudius chose his step-son. However, because Agrippina was afraid that he would change his mind and prefer Britannicus, she decided to kill her husband. After the death of Claudius, therefore, Nero was made emperor. The soldiers greeted him; Nero however did not want to be called “father of the homeland” because he was still a young man. Agrippina took many jobs for herself; at first, Nero called her “the best mother”, because he himself preferred to write verses and act on the stage. Soon however Agrippina seemed to desire power for herself. When Nero received ambassadors, his mother wanted to sit with him. Nero had married Octavia, but he had many girl-friends; when Agrippina criticised him, he was angry.

Exercise 11.11

Nero was thinking about a dreadful crime. For he was on fire with love of Poppaea; he wanted to divorce his wife Octavia. Poppaea wanted marriage for herself. This however seemed to be difficult because Nero, although he himself held the highest power, feared the power of his mother. Therefore he decided to kill Agrippina. However, he did not know how he could bring about her death. Agrippina was always guarded by her slaves. Nero therefore could neither put poison in her food, nor attack her with a sword.

At last a certain freedman, Anicetus by name, who had once been a friend of Nero, said that a ship could be built in such a way that a part would be detached and fall into the sea; in this way Agrippina herself would fall into the water. “The danger of the sea,” he said, “is great. Many things can happen there. If your mother dies while she is sailing, who will think she was killed by a crime? Everyone will believe that the wind and waves killed Agrippina by chance. After her death you will be able to build a temple: in this way you will show your love and grief.”

Exercise 11.12

Nero praised the plan. Therefore a ship was prepared in order to kill his mother. The emperor invited his mother to a villa which was near the sea. When Agrippina had arrived, she was received gladly by her son. Nero had ordered a great meal to be prepared, so that the crime could happen in the night. After dinner he showed his mother the beautiful ship by the light of the stars; she went on board. The sea was calm: Nero therefore was afraid that people would not believe that the ship had been destroyed by a storm. However, the ship began to sail. A slave-girl of Agrippina was talking with her mistress about Nero’s kindness. Soon however, when the signal had been given, the roof, weighed down with much lead, fell.

One friend of Agrippina was killed immediately. She and her maid however were protected by the high sides of a couch; nor did the break-up of the ship follow. Some knew about the plan, others did not know what was happening: everyone was shouting loudly. Some were trying to sink the ship, others to save it. Many who were in the ship were thrown gently into the sea; among these were Agrippina and the slave-girl. The unfaithful slave-girl shouted that she was Agrippina, so that she would receive help quickly; however, she was at once attacked with oars and finished off. Agrippina herself, because she was quiet, was not noticed, but she understood everything that she had seen. Although she had received a small wound, she was able to swim; soon, after being saved by a small fishing boat, she was carried back to her own house.



Exercise 11.13

Agrippina could now understand Nero's plan. For she knew that she had been invited to the villa, to dinner, to the ship in order to be killed. Neither the wind nor a storm but her wicked son had tried to destroy the ship. Thinking about the death of the slave-girl, Agrippina said to herself, "I shall be safest if I seem to know nothing." She therefore sent a messenger to Nero to say that with the help of the gods she had been saved; then she tended her wound. Nero meanwhile, when he heard that his mother was still living, was terrified. For he was afraid that Agrippina would report the whole affair to the senators. Therefore he summoned his friends and asked them what he ought to do. They were quiet for a long time. At last, one encouraged Nero to seek the help of Anicetus again. When the freedman had promised that he himself would kill Agrippina, Nero said that power was being given to him on that day; by the gift of a freedman he was being set free.

Exercise 11.14

Nero now adopted another plan. When a messenger from Agrippina arrived, he ordered a sword to be thrown between his feet while he was speaking, as if hidden previously in his clothes. Then he ordered the messenger to be captured, saying that he had been sent by Agrippina to kill him. For he had it in mind to say afterwards that his mother herself had sought death, since she had tried in vain to kill her son. Meanwhile a large crowd gathered at Agrippina's house. For everyone wanted to greet her because she had been saved from danger.

However, when they saw armed men approaching, they immediately left. Some soldiers with Anicetus as leader broke down the door of the house. The slaves also fled. Agrippina was in her bedroom with a slave-girl. When the slave-girl got up to leave, Agrippina asked, "Are you also leaving me?" Then, when the men had entered, she said to them "If you have come to greet me, say to Nero that I am doing well; if to kill me, I shall believe nothing bad about my son." The soldiers stood round the couch. Agrippina offered her womb to one soldier who was drawing his sword. "Strike this belly," she shouted, "from where that wicked man came," and with many wounds she was finished off.

Exercise 11.15

Prasutagus, the king of the Iceni, famous because he had a lot of money and ruled for many years, died. In order to save his kingdom and his house, he made Caesar his heir together with his two daughters. But in vain, for the kingdom was laid waste by soldiers, the house by slaves. His wife Boudicca was beaten, his daughters raped; many of his relatives were made slaves. The Romans took the whole land as if it was a gift.

And so the chiefs of the Iceni seized arms, and roused other tribes. They made a plan that everyone would be set free after the Romans had been forced to depart from the island. They most intensely hated the veterans who had received Camulodunum as a colony. For they were expelling the Britons from their houses and driving them from the fields; they were calling them slaves and prisoners. Roman soldiers were encouraging the veterans, because they themselves wanted to do such things. The temple of Divine Claudius was seen to be a sign of



everlasting tyranny, and the Britons who were chosen as priests were forced to pay out much money. The Britons thought that they could easily destroy the colony. For the city did not have walls, because the Roman leaders had never feared that it would be attacked.

Exercise 11.16

The statue of Victory that was in the colony by chance fell to the ground; it seemed to have been defeated and to be fleeing from the enemy. Women reported that dreadful voices had been heard, a vision of the colony destroyed had been seen near the Thames, and the sea had the colour of blood. All these things gave the Britons hope, the Romans fear. The veterans fled into the temple; there they were attacked by the Britons for two days; then they were defeated.

When Cerialis with the ninth legion arrived bringing help, he himself also was defeated. Suetonius, who was far away fighting with the Druids, hurried to London as quickly as possible. At first he had it in mind to pitch camp there; however, when he saw that the place was not strong, he preferred to save the province rather than London alone. The Britons also attacked Verulamium, looking for booty; very many Roman citizens were killed. Suetonius therefore prepared to do battle.

Exercise 11.17

Leading the fourteenth legion, Suetonius chose a place in a valley, and placed his men in order. The Britons were running in all directions in no order. However, because they thought they were going to win, they had brought their wives with them. They were standing on wagons, in order to watch the victory. Boudicca herself, standing in a chariot, spoke to the crowd: "The Britons have often fought with a woman as leader. I however am fighting for a lost kingdom, for a beaten body, for seized daughters. The Romans want to take everything for themselves. The gods however will guard us. One legion has already fallen; the rest prefer to stay in their camp rather than to fight with us. They will be able to bear neither our shouts nor our weapons. If you do not want to be slaves, we must win today." Suetonius meanwhile encouraged his soldiers: "Do not be afraid of the crowd and the noise of the enemy. You see more women than men." Then when the signal had been given the Romans attacked the enemy in order. The Britons fled quickly, but they were obstructed by the wagons; very many were killed. Boudicca ended her own life with poison.

Exercise 11.18

When Nero was emperor a disaster crushed the city, more serious than all those that had happened before. For a huge fire destroyed the greater part of Rome. No-one knew whether it had happened by chance or by a crime of the emperor. The beginning was near the Circus Maximus, among shops where merchandise was sold by which the flames are fed. The fire, driven by the wind, was soon strong. Very high flames rose up; they easily overcame the walls both of houses and of temples. The fire progressed quickly through the narrow streets, built long ago.

Terrified citizens were shouting; old men, women and children were crying. Some got in the way of others. If they fled into the nearest part of the city, they found the fire there also. No



place seemed to be without danger. Some who themselves were able to flee died because they were trying to help relatives. No-one was trying to defend himself against the fire. There were men in the streets who forbade the flames to be extinguished: they said that they had been ordered to do this. Others were even throwing fire-brands.

When the fire began Nero himself was away from Rome. When he returned, the flames were already approaching his house which was on the Palatine; this was soon destroyed. The emperor threw open the Campus Martius, the temples and even his own gardens so that the citizens would have a place of refuge; he ordered the price of food to be reduced. He did all these things in order to be praised by the citizens; but in vain. For the rumour spread that Nero, when the city was being destroyed by fire, had taken his lyre and on the roof had sung about the destruction of Troy, comparing the fire of Rome with ancient events.

Exercise 11.19

At last on the sixth day an end of the fire was made, with many buildings demolished so that it could not advance. The citizens however were still terrified. Many believed that Nero wanted to make the middle of the city empty, so that he could build a huge house for himself; many said that he was even going to found a new city, called by his own name. Many houses, apartment blocks, temples of the gods were destroyed by the fire. The altar once dedicated by Evander, the temple built by Romulus himself were burned. The booty of many victories, the prizes of Greek art, books handed down by ancestors were lost. A new city was soon rising; but although it was beautiful, the old men kept in their minds all the things that they were never going to see again. There were those who said that this fire had begun on the same day on which the Gauls had once burned the captured city.

Exercise 11.20

Many people believed that the fire had been ordered by the emperor. Nero therefore, in order to destroy the rumour, decided to blame those who were called by the crowd Christians. They had that name from Christ who, when Tiberius was emperor, was punished with the death penalty by Pontius Pilate. The dreadful superstition, crushed for short time, broke out again, not only in Judaea where it began, but even in Rome, to where all evil things flow together. Those who confessed themselves to be Christians were captured; then many others were found. They were forced to pay the worst penalties. They were torn apart by dogs; put on crosses, they were burned in order to give light at night. Nero had offered his gardens for this show; he himself was walking through the crowd wearing a charioteer's clothes. But at last the citizens pitied the Christians, since they were being punished not for the safety of the city, but for the pleasure of a most savage emperor.